

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3455

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 2414

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJ: TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER AND OPIUM PROBLEM

REF: A. ANKARA 2192, B. ANKARA 2203

1. AS INDICATED REF B, WE HAD DECIDED RESPOND TO FOREIGN MINISTER GUNES "MESSAGE" (REF A) LATE THIS WEEK IN FIRM BUT LOW KEY WAY. THIS DECISION WAS REINFORCED MARCH 27 WHEN THE MARCH 27 STATE LUNCH FOR VISITING CYPRUS VICE PRESIDENT DENKTAS, GUENS TOLD AMBASSADOR: "GOOD NEWS* I HAVE RECEIVED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM WASHINGTON AND I AM NO LONGER SO ANGRY." AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS GLAD TO HEAR THAT BUT DID NOT PURSUE MATTER AS MANY DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES WERE WITHIN EARSHOT.

2. ON MARCH 29, THEREFORE, DCM SPAIN SPOKE WITH SOYLEMEZ, HEAD, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MFA. SPAIN SAID THAT EMBASSY HAD BEEN SADDENED BY FOREIGN MINISTER'S "MESSAGE" RE CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND RANGEL (REFTELS) AND BELIEVED IT UNFAIR IN MANY RESPECTS. HE MENTIONED THAT (A) CONGRESSMEN HAD BEEN INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF VIEWS OF PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER WHICH, OF COURSE, HAD EARLIER BEEN REPORTED TO WASHINGTON, (B) THAT FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF HAD MADE HIS VIEWS CLEAR TO CONGRESSMEN, AND (C) THAT CONGRESSMEN DO NOT SPEAK OFFICIALLY FOR USG.

3. ON OUR SIDE, WE RECOGNIZE THAT ALL REMARKS ON
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OPIUM MADE IN TURKEY, EVEN WHEN ATTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS

OF PARLIAMENT, DO NOT REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE GOT. WE HAVE AVOIDED REACTING TO THESE, SOME OF WHICH HAVE BEEN VERY UNPLEASANT AND WE CERTAINLY DO NOT INTEND TO TRY TO INHIBIT THE ACTIVITIES OR PRIVILEGES OF ANY TURKISH PARLIAMENTARIAN WHO MAY WISH TO COME TO US. LAST THING WE WISH TO DO IS CONTRIBUTE TO CONTINUATION OF RANCOROUS DIALOGUE WITH MFA WHICH WE SURE SHARES OUR OWN DESIRE DEAL WITH THIS EMOTIONALLY-LOADED PROBLEM IN WAY DESIGNED MINIMIZE DAMAGE TO OUR RELATIONS. LET US RATHER TALK ABOUT HOW WE CAN AVOID PROVOKING PASSIONS IN FUTURE. OUR POLICY REMAINS ONE OF STRONGLY URGING GOT NOT GO BACK IN OPIUM BUSINESS BUT WE ALSO DOING ALL WE CAN THROUGH BRIEFINGS PRESS AND CONGRESS TO GET ACROSS OBJECTIVE VIEW OF ISSUE. WE HOPE GOT WILL DO SAME.

4. SOYLEMEZ WARMLY WELCOMED OUR DECISION NOT ENGAGE IN FULL DRESS REBUTTAL TO FOREIGN MINISTER. SAID THAT "MESSAGE" WAS RESULT "EMOTIONAL OUTBURST" WHICH HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN MFA HAD BEEN UNABLE TO PREVENT AND HE HOPED NONE OF US WOULD FIND OURSELVES FACED WITH SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT INFUTURE. (PLEASE TAKE MAXIMUM CARE PROTECT HOM ON THIS REMARK.) WE GRATEFUL US EFFORTS GET ACROSS OBJECTIVE VIEW OF PROBLEM IN US AND WOULD TRY TO DO SAME HERE. TO LATTER END, HE WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL ANYTHING THAT COULD BE DONE TO DIVERT VISITS MORE OPIUM- INTERESTED CONGRESSMEN FOR AWHILE AT LEASTA.

5. COMMENT: ABOVE CONFIRMS OUR VIEW (REF B) THAT "MESSAGE" RESULTED FROM INEXPERIENCED FOREIGN MINISTER'S SIMPLY LOSING HIS TEMPER. WE PROPOSE CONSIDER MATTER ENDED, BEARING IN MIND, HOWEVER, THAT A REPETITION IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE WHEN THE VOLATILE GUNES ENCOUNTERS SOMETHING WHICH SHARPLY UPSETS HIM.
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